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CITE

DIST 23 MARCH 1971

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

DOI 20 JANUARY - 6 FEBRUARY 1971

SUBJECT EXECUTION OF TWO U.S. PRISONERS OF WAR BY VIET CONG
IN TAKEO PROVINCE, CAMBODIA

ACC VIET YM, CAN THO / 16 FEBRUARY 1971

SOURCE

1. ON 20 JANUARY 1971 TWO CAUCASIAN U.S. PRISONERS OF WAR
/POW/, THREE CAMBODIAN POW'S, TWO IN MILITARY UNIFORM AND ONE
IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES, AND TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS WERE

I
IMPRISONED BY THE VIET CONG /VC/ IN A CAVE ON NUI /MOUNTAIN/
GIAI, TINH BIEN DISTRICT, CHAU DOC PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM
/VIC VS920579/. THE TWO U.S.

POW'S WERE KEPT BLINDFOLDED BUT NOT BOUND. ALL SEVEN PRISONERS
WERE KEPT ON NUI GIAI FROM 20-26 JANUARY 1971--THEY WERE MOVED
IN A GROUP FROM ONE HOLDING AREA TO ANOTHER SEVERAL TIMES
DAILY AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS. THEY USUALLY MOVED AT LEAST ONCE
BETWEEN 2400 AND 0300 HOURS. THE U.S. PRISONERS WERE INDIVID-
UALLY REMOVED FROM THE GROUP OF PRISONERS AT IRREGULAR HOURS
FOR PERIODS RANGING FROM ONE TO THREE HOURS AT A TIME, ALWAYS
AT NIGHT. [REDACTED] COMMENT--THE AMERICANS WERE PROBABLY BEING
INTERROGATED AT THESE TIMES BECAUSE THE TWO VIETNAMESE WERE
ALSO TAKEN FROM THE GROUP INDIVIDUALLY FOR INTERROGATIONS WHICH
USUALLY LASTED SEVERAL HOURS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] HE ALSO SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE PRISONERS
WERE PHYSICALLY HARMED DURING THESE INTERROGATIONS. / ONE OF
THE CAMBODIAN PRISONERS ATTEMPTED TO CONVERSE WITH THE
AMERICANS IN ENGLISH BUT WAS IMMEDIATELY REPRIMANDED BY HIS

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[REDACTED]

VC CAPTIVES WHO SAID TALKING AMONG THE PRISONERS WAS FORBIDDEN. THE PRISONERS WERE FED SWEET POTATOES AND SALTED RICE TWICE DAILY, USUALLY AT 1200 HOURS AND AT 1500 HOURS. THE AMERICANS HAD NOT BEEN WOUNDED.

2. ON THE NIGHT OF 26 JANUARY ALL SEVEN PRISONERS WERE MOVED FROM NUI GIAI INTO TAKEO PROVINCE, CAMBODIA, VIC VS795695, WHERE THEY WERE KEPT CLOSE TO THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN IN A DENSE JUNGLE AREA. THE PRISONERS WERE ESCORTED BY ABOUT 70 VC OF THE 512TH LOCAL FORCE BATTALION AND TINH BIEN DISTRICT UNIT UNDER THE COMMAND OF DOAN BINH PHONG, SECRETARY OF THE TINH BIEN DISTRICT COMMITTEE. AFTER ENTERING CAMBODIA THE BLINDFOLDS WERE REMOVED FROM THE AMERICAN PRISONERS AND THEY WERE BOUND TOGETHER BY THEIR WRISTS. IN CAMBODIA THE PRISONERS WERE MOVED TO NEW LOCATIONS SEVERAL TIMES DAILY AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS. ON 5 FEBRUARY THE TWO VIETNAMESE PRISONERS AND THE CAMBODIAN PRISONER DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES WERE ORDERED TO DIG FOUR GRAVES. THAT SAME EVENING THE TWO AMERICANS AND THE TWO FATIGUE-CLAD CAMBODIANS WERE TAKEN TO THE EDGES OF THE GRAVES AND SHOT. THE BODIES FELL INTO THE PREPARED GRAVES AND THE PRISONERS WHO HAD DUG

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THE GRAVES THEN FILLED THEM AGAIN. THERE WAS NO TRIAL HELD FOR THE PRISONERS PRIOR TO THE EXECUTION NOR WERE THERE ANY REASONS GIVEN FOR KILLING THE PRISONERS.

3. /FIELD COMMENT--ON THE NIGHT OF 16 JANUARY CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY ON TA BEC MOUNTAIN /VIC VS947629/ RESULTED IN THE DEATHS OF SEVEN U.S. SOLDIERS. TWO OTHER SOLDIERS, WHOM THE JOINT PRISONER RECOVERY CENTER HAS IDENTIFIED AS FIRST LIEUTENANT GERALD F. KINSMAN AND SERGEANT JAMES A. HARWOOD, WERE REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION.

ON THE NIGHT OF 18 JANUARY, [REDACTED] ABOVE ONE U.S. POW, WHO HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY MEMBERS OF THE 9TH VC DIVISION DURING THIS ACTION, FROM TA BEC MOUNTAIN /VIC VS945678/ TO O-TA-NOC /VS975593/ AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO NUI GIAI WHERE HE WAS TURNED OVER TO THE TINH BIEN DISTRICT PARTY COMMITTEE./

4. FIELD DISSEM-STATE /AMBASSADOR PUNKER, DEPUTY AMBASSADOR BERGER, MINISTER COUNSELOR POLITICAL/, USMACV /GENERAL ABRAMS,

AMBASSADOR COLBY, MAJOR GENERAL POTTS/, 7TH AIR FORCE / GENERAL
CLAY, BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN/, JPRC / COLONEL MCINCYL/, LINDIS
TO CINCPAC, PACFLT, ARPAC, PACAF

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